

Defining the relationship between church and parachurch

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The Scriptures only speak of the church or the body of Christ. Yet, in our American evangelical culture we speak of church and parachurch. The distinction between the two relates more to how parachurch organizations define their role than to biblical patterns.

Defined

A parachurch organization is a ministry that exists to accomplish specific purposes within the larger mandate given to the church, while forsaking some of the ordinances of the local church including communion and baptism.

Benefits

I reject the idea that parachurch ministries exist only because the local church has forsaken her responsibilities. I believe that God brought about parachurch ministries to accomplish things that no local church or even denomination could accomplish on its own without jeopardizing its overall mandate to serve the various needs of its body.

Campus Crusade for Christ—the Campus Ministry

I believe God raised up this ministry to reach the 1% of the human population that are college students. We call it the powerful percent because it is college graduates who will influence the direction of our world. Because of the unique nature of the college campus and the unique needs of students, it is strategic to have a ministry devoted solely to reaching this important segment of society. Because of the size of our organization and the scope of our mission, we offer opportunities to students that no local church could offer by itself.

Equally as significant, there are things that the local church offers to our students that we cannot and do not want to offer. In the local church our students are exposed to the whole body of Christ, its collective wisdom, its view of all aspects of life, from birth to death, and its variety of gifts and needs. In the local church students are also given opportunities to participate in the ordinances of the church—baptism and communion. Finally, if students are going to walk with God for a lifetime they are going to do it within the local church.

In summary, we offer to the local church a partnership to help reach college students and the local church offers to us the full view and benefits of a diverse body of believers committed to the full mandate given to the body of Christ.